SPIRIT OF THE PRESS

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPOS CURRENT TOPICS-COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVANING TELEGRAPH.

THE BRITISH EXCITEMENT.

From the N. Y. Tribune. No doubt can now be entertained that Engish sentiment, both public and private, is in-ensely excited with respect to the American occusations arising out of the international debate on the Alabama claims. The singular note of alarm uttered by a man in the friendry position of Goldwin Smith signifies much as to the extremity and the error of English feeling on That subject. One tone of indignation or lament pervades the English press. There is a gleam of fre in the public expressions of Englishmen, Those who were friendly to us during the war resent the formidable charges made by Mr. Summer. Men who are ordinarily conservative as to any disposition on the part of England to display a belligerent feeling to a strong antagonist are now prone to say disagreeable things of America. Throughout English society there is unanimity of tone and temper with regard to the question of the hour. Messrs, Summer and idler may take whatever credit they please to themselves for having once thoroughly un-

Bettled a not easily excitable nation. Nothing occurs, however, in the present tem-per of English opinion which need move as from our self-possession. We are amused while we regret that the English should be so far roused out of their old habit of equanimity as to look upon the possibility of early war, and to fancy that the Englishmen on these shores are about to leave in a general stampede. At the same time we cannot easily bring ourselves to mourn over England's wrath, or quite deplore the provocation which some of us appear to have given her. We have regrets that the matter between the nations has not been settled in a friendly and equitable way, as it surely could have been, without vast circumlecation, or a process of never-ending dinners. But we cannot say that the recent manifestations of our brethren across the water excite us to downright repentance. On the contrary, we trust that in the offense somewhat unduly taken by them out of the moral statement of our claims by Mr. Sumner, the irritation is wholesome and remedial. Englishmen may feel angered at our complacency, but, after having disclaimed any disposition to further expend ourselves on the Alabama question, either in war or money, they will understand hs when we say that we have no computations visitings respecting the future relations of the

Never before were the relations of two great and kindred countries so thoroughly discussed as now. It is from this fact that we hope for the growth of a more just and enlightened feeling between them. But that result is not to be brought out by anything but the reverse of that habit of diplomatic abjection pursued by Mr. Reverdy Johnson. Mr. Sumner's earnest views are the natural reaction after the delay In the settlement of our claims, and the in-glorious career of our late Minister. It is from a position as a moralist rather than as a statesman that Mr. Sumner directs his philippic against England and in the car of the world. His charge is that a nation speaking our own tongue, and professing the same abhorrence of slavery, was willing to betray us for gold and for slavery. This is the amount of It morally, and it would not be out of the natural fitness of things if Englishmen feelingly understood it. Nations in their great aggregate are not distinguished for acts of signal unselfishness, and doubtless our own is not an exception to that rule. For that reason it is no business of ours to hold our national contemporary to any abstract rule of right, and we could not, if we would, make the moral accusation of Mr. Sumner's speech the basis of a violent demand. This truth the English public fail to perceive, and it will be some time before they are brought to know that the tempers of the two nations have undergone a change with respect to the question at issue. It is now England which is susceptible and sensitive, and America which is complacent and self-possessed. We do not marvel that the British press now

especially discuss Canada as one of the points threatened by the speech of Mr. Sumner. The speech of ex-Minister Galt, pledging Canada to ostility to the United States upon the present lastic, even were England out of the question, has been warmly approved. The possibility of our taking Canada in the case of war has been looked in the face—the possibility of war has been accepted. Few words are needed in We do not desire war: we do not need Before making war, we shall have made sure that we could not do better by peace. When we take Canada, it will in all probability be as a gift. Both in respect to Canada and to England, we can afford to bide our time.

THE EFFORTS OF PORTUGAL TO ABOLISH SLAVERY.

From the N. Y. Times.

The kingdom of Portugal has followed in the footsteps of its larger though younger sister, the United States. By a royal decree of the 25th of February last, published in the official gazette on the 37th of the same month, the abolition of slavery is declared in all the Portuguese colo All slaves are to be considered free and in a condition similar to that of Chinese laborers who by their own act have bound themselves to labor in the English and French colonies. is to be their condition until April 29, 1878. when, in accordance with the decree of April 29, 1858, they will be entitled to all the rights and privileges of Portuguese citizens, and all engagements and contracts which may have been made by them in their former condition will thenceforth be null and void.

The Portuguese Government has ever used its best endeavors to put a stop to the slave trade, both by the establishment of naval stations on the coasts of Africa and by the faithful execu-tion of the treaty of 1842 with Great Britain, the terms of which are similar to our slave trade treaties with that power. Carrying out strictly the provisions of this treaty, and sincerely de voted to its humane principles, the Portuguese Government has found no sacrifice too great to put a stop to this infamous traffic, though the difficulties it encountered were very great. For many years the abolition of slavery has

found able and untiring champions in the Portuguese Parliament, such as the Marquis de Sa Bandeira, now President of the Council of Ministers, and the Counts de Lavradio and de Avrila. The Marquis especially has for many years past sustained the same principles as those advocate by Lord Brougham in the British Parliament and Charles Sumner in our own Senate.

A series of laws in regard to this subject prove how desirous Portugal has ever been to see slavery abolished in its colonies. A decree of December 14, 1854, declared that

"All slaves belonging to the Government shall b free,' and ordered that 'the names of all other slaves shall be registered within thirty days, at the expira-tion of which time all slaves whose names have not been presented or inserted in said register shall be considered as free.

By compensating his owner, every slave had the right to acquire his own freedom. The emancipated slaves, together with their children, were placed under the protection of the Government, represented by commissions established in the several capital cities of the transma-rine colonies, and of which the Bishop of the diocese was to be the permanent President.

On the 24th of July, 1846, a law was promulgated declaring free all children thereafter born of female slaves in Portuguese colonies. Of course the effects of this law would have been the eventual abolition of slavery, even if no other measures for that purpose had been adopted. But, by the decree of April 29, 1858, of which we have already spoken, the total abolition of slavery in the Portuguese colonies was fixed

All these measures prove the sincere desire of Portugal to put an end to slavery, and it is not without interest to observe how this country endeavored centuries ago to better the condition of a class which only many years later became the subject of the humane sentiments and civi-

lizing efforts of other more powerful nations. On the 20th of March, 1570, the King of Portugal ordered

The law of August 22. 1587, declared "That the Indians who worked on estates should not be retained there as slaves, but should be perfectly free as long as they remained."

The law of September 10, 1661, enacted "That all natives who were in captivity at that time should be set at liberty and be free." The law of April 1, 1680, declared "That thenceforth no Indians should be enslaved, not even in the cases xcepted by former laws.

Finally, with special reference to the African race, the dates of the following laws show how early Portugal was animated by those Christian sentiments which have gradually brought about the abolition of slavery.

The law of September 19, 1761, declared that all black slaves coming henceforth to the ports of the kingdoms of Portugal and Algarye, from merica, Spain or Asia, shall be free. The royal order of January 2, 1707, extended this benefi-cent measure to mulattoes of both sexes who had or been included in the preceding law.

Finally, the law of January 16, 1773, enacted "That the children of all slaves born therenfter in the kingdom of Portugal should be free and be ca-pable of holding office, honors and dignities without that stigma left upon freedmen which the supersti-tion of the Romans had established in their customs, and which Christianity and civil society now render intolerable in the kingdom."

We have endeavored to present to our readers hese meritorious acts so honorable to a nation which, though limited in its resources and small n its extent, was at one time a first-class mariime power, whose seamen were the pioneer among discoverers. The learned Richard Henry Major, in his "Life of Prince Henry of Portupublished in London in 1868, draws a vivid icture of the first days of that epoch in which ortugal created empires and founded great ities at a distance of six thousand miles across the sea, and when, with the flag of the Cross and of civilization floating at the stern of its galleons, it opened the way of discovery to the other nations of the world.

WHO ARE THE IMPERIALISTS:

From the N. Y. Herald. The high court of imperial nincompoops has been in session in this city for some time past. It is hard to tell whether they are a branch opped from a trunk of themselves or an offshoot from the imperial houses of China, Japan, France, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Muscat, Brazil, or Hayti. The glories of the Shah of Persia, the Sultan of Turkey, the Khan of Tartary, the Great Mogul, and the High Cockalorum of the New Dominion of Canada sink into Insignificance before the piercing lights of this new imperial Yankee revelation. To read some of our xchanges one would think that the republic and gone to the empire of the dogs, and that cats and rattlesnakes were commanders of th situation. They copy articles from a two and catchpenny concern in this city that has an mperial crown surmounting its title heading, is a washtub would a laundry advertisement, ndexing its character. A fool's cap would have cen a more appropriate emblem. fools or lumities are not all dead yet, or we should not see such a vapid caricature upon ournalism placed upon the news stands. S have thought that the publication of a sheet like this would kindle a riot: that the Police Com-missioners would be obliged to double the force of their department in view of the tremendous nthence it would exercise in exasperating our liberty-loving and republican-loving population, and in contributing towards the cheerful spectacle of pulling down houses, smashing up presses, knocking type into cocked hats, all illuminated with dissolving views of editors and reporters with their eyes done up in elegant lines of black and blue, streaked with yellow. But the teachings of this organ of imperialism and the vaporings of its followers would be innocuous were they not farcical. They make men laugh, and any distemper that excites the risibles of mankind is always calculated to make them think. Byron said:

"A single drop of ink May make thousands, may, millions, think." A solitary laugh in an audience of thousands made more than one man ponder. There-

fore a good laugh is almost as potent as a drop of ink for the purpose of ventilating an idea. When Daniel Webster spoke of the city of New York as the "Imperial City" of the New World, he did not refer to it in the ridiculous sens now attached to the phrase by these imperial monkeys and apes of foreign pomposity. Talk about making the United States an em-We are an empire already—an empire of republicanism, an empire of free thought, an empire of progress, development, intelligence. and civilization. By the aid of steam, cash, genius, enterprise, and electricity, we have become an empire whose diadem contains gems that shed rays to the uttermost parts of the earth, attracting hither the forlorn, the downtrodden, the frugal, the industrious, the pro-

gressive of all nations.

Imagine an empire in this land after the manner of the empire of Hayti, with a polished and magnificent bald-headed philosopher in goggles, like Greeley, wearing the imperial purple, as the greasy and sooty Soulonque wore his. Think of what the court of the Emperor Horace might consist of, taken from among his bosom friends and most intimate confreres. Colorado Jewett as his Lord High Chamberlain, with the title of Duke of Clap-trap and the legend Sass et Brass in his crest, George N. Sanders as the Imperial bearer, with the title of Lord of the Rag-tag and Bobtalls, his chief employment being to hand the imperial cup to his imperial master, after testing the juice, upon a principle peculiar to Lord George himself, to ascertain whether its stimulating properties have been pro-perly exhaused. George Francis Train, Prince of Flap-Jacks and Jump-up-Johnnies. Grand Usher of the Household and Tier-up in General of Feminine Apron Strings; his Royal Highness Prince Jefferson Davis, Baron Jake Thompson, and Viscount Beverly Tucker, Imperial Bum-bailliffs and Procurers-General of Bail for his Imperial Majesty whenever his Imperial Majesty gets his imperial body into tight places. A court composed of cavallers like these would eclipse the Day & Martin shine imparted to the court of Soulonque, with all its pretentious and high-sounding titles of Duke of Lemon-ade, Prince of Softshells, Viscount Marmalade, Lord of the Cocktails, Baron Brown Stouts,

But we have had quantum suf. of this imperial ridiculus mus. Satis cum imperio. It has been talked about long enough and imperiously enough, and our people want its advocates to cease their clamor in regard to it. It is a fit theme for an amusing negro minstrel extravaganza and nothing more.

REUNION OF THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN CHURCHES,

From the N. Y. World. The debate which took place on Saturday in the General Assembly of the Old School Presbyterian Church on the question of re-establishing unity of organization between the Northern and the Southern branches of that Christian denomination, brings up a topic of great interest, which will perhaps bear discussion by the political press. The political union between the North and the South, for the preservation of which we have spilled so much blood, will never be recemented so long as it rests upon a merely politi-cal arrangement supported by armed force. The strongest ligaments of the Union, so long as the Union was dear to the affections of the people were the common sentiments and mutual sympathy cherished by the great Christian denominations. The weakening and sundering of the began in the churches. The great Methodist denomination was first rent asunder by differences of sentiment on the subject of slavery: then folowed a split in the great Baptist denomination and the other churches were successively divided as the alienation of feeling between the two sec-tions progressed. The principal American churches, with the exception of the Catholic, are organized on a basis very nearly corresponding to our political institutions. The churches were representative bodies. They had an organization which culminated in each denomination

in a general assembly, general conference,

A. A. C.

"That the savage natives of Brazil and other con-quered countries should be treated and considered as free men, without being in any mode or manner cap-tives, excepting those who were taken in lawful war-fare or who continued to assail the Portuguese for the purpose of cannibalism." represented in a national convocation which is the supreme ecclesiastical authority in each de-nomination. The Union began to be dissolved

with the disruption of the great Christian deno-minations. This sundered the ties by which the hearts of the two sections were knit together in cordial attachment. Until these these an be re-newed by the reunion of the Churches, the polltical Union will be a feeble and precarious bond.

The diversities of creed and church organizaion which have always existed in this country

have been a political blessing. Each religious denomination being a minority of the whole people, we have been saved from all danger of the establishment of a State Church to domineer over the consciences of dissenters, or subjecthem to disabilities for the exercise of their But there has been a still greater advanfaith. tage. The strong dislike and repugnance with rival sects regard each other have strengthened the unitual attachment among members of the same denomination, and caused them to feel a warmer interest in persons of their own communion in distant States than in residents of the same neighborhood who profess a different creed. In this manner, the public affections of the religious part of our people were expanded and enlarged, and ties coextensive with the Union were stronger and more operative than the local sympathies which bound the inhabitants of the same locality together. The Northern Methodist did not, in deed, feel a strong attachment to the whole body of the Southern people, but only to the Southern Methodists, who were dearer to him than the Calvinistic neighbors whose church ediffer was located in the same village with his own In the same manner the Northern Baptist took a liveller interest in the Southern Baptists than in his immediate neighbors who called sprinkling baptism, and administered the rite to infants. The Episcopalian felt his heart go out in warmer regard for Southern churchmen than for the neighboring sects who seerned the surplice of the clergyman, and disliked the affect ing supplications of the liturgy. Thus, although no sect of religionists cared anything for the Southern people as such, each cherished a rooted attachment to the Southern part of its own denomination. Each religious sect being thus bound together in strong fraternal bonds. the joint result of these various ties was that the whole body of religious people North was united to the whole body of religious people South: the separate sects being like the strands of a cable by whose joint strength the Union was bound together. When these strands were strained till they parted, one after another, the political Union became one of mere force and course material interests, which easily gave way

n the fury of excited passions.

The strength of religious ties as a bond of common sympathy between the North and the South is not easily appreciated by the inhabi-tants of cities. The people of the South are mostly devoted to agriculture; and religion cuters ar more largely into the life of a rural than o an urban population. The stir and bustle o cities, their numerous public meetings, their so ial and festive gatherings, their clubs, their theatres, their habit of decouring fresh news in the daily papers, render religion less important as a social tie and a bond of common sympathy. In the country, people have few occasions of meeting except at church on Sunday. The hour between the morning and the afternoon service dfords the only regular opportunity for interchanging opinions and learning the news of the locality. The church is almost the only place where women can wear their best apparel, and where young people of both sexes can enjoy the pleasure of looking into one another's faces. Such motives assist in bringing people out to church; and when there, they are s to such impressions as the intellect and fervor of the elergyman and participation in a common worship are calculated to produce. The church is the centre of social life to every rural population. It is the chief agent in developing such affections as expand beyond the narrow circle of family ties. It is almost the only incentive and prop of rural civilization. It draws people out of the otherwise constant isolation of their ubjects them to the wholesome of mutual observation and criticism, gives them motive for cultivating some refinement in dress nd manners, interests them in other topics than their daily toil, cultivates their capacity for public sympathy, and enlarges their affections o take in, first the people and concerns of their sarish, and through it of their religious denomi-

When, therefore, the ties were sundered between the Northern and Southern wings of the great Christian denominations, there was almost total interruption of a common life and abitual common sympathies between the great ody of the people of the two sections. After the division of the principal churches, the only emaining sympathetic tie was that which held logether the great political parties. But the ame causes which rent the former did not long spare the latter. Before the slavery agitation, party ties were a great deal stronger than seconal ties. Northern Whigs felt more interest n Southern Whigs, Northern Democrats were nearer in feeling to Southern Democrats, than members of these rival parties were to each other in their own section. Even our flercest party contests were, therefore, bonds of union though inferior in strength to the religious attachment, masmuch as polities enter less constantly into the daily life of the people than

In recementing the Union we need to reverse the process by which it was dissevered. We must reconstruct political parties coextensive with the whole country; and above all, we must reunite the divided Churches. Until these two objects are accomplished, there can be but a feede common life in the two great sections; but a feeble circulation of those cordial sympathies which alone can make us truly one people. The let ate in the General Assembly on Saturday wa gratifying in so far as it indicates a growing dedre for reunion; but the heat of the discussion shows that there must be a farther cooling of the late unchristian animosities before this great result can be consummated. What is true of the Presbyterian denomination, we suppose to be equally true of the Metho-dist and the Baptist. The chief ob-stacle to reunion at present is the bitter memory of the action of the representative bodies of the several Churches during the war. Religious men ought to have foreseen that the war would end; that after its close a reunion of Churches would be desirable; and they should have thrown no unnecessary obstacles in the way of future cordiality. Instead of this wise and prudent course, they intruded all the pasdonate and denunciatory asperity of sectional polities into the public action of the religious bodies. It is the keen sense of these unchristian denunciations which thwarts the early restora-tion of the old bonds of affection. We regret that any of the speakers in the General Assembly thought it necessary to bring up so irritating a topic: for the more it is kept out of sight the better will be the chances of restoring the los unity of the Churches, and of making the North and the South truly one people,

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